

Adult TANF Training Voucher Policy Policy #P-31-12.22

Re: Guidance on the provision of training vouchers for eligible adult TANF program participants.

Updated January 14, 2024
Originated: December 8, 2022
Approved: January 18, 2023 (DHS Approved)
Revision Approved: N/A

References: 55 Pa. Code § 141.5
55 Pa. Code § 141.53(a)
55 Pa. Code § 141.54(a)
55 Pa. Code § 141.55
55 Pa. Code § 141.56

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I. Adult TANF Training Voucher Policy:

- A. SCPa Works has adopted the following policy concerning the use of training vouchers for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) participants in the South Central Employment Retention and Advancement Network (EARN) program.
- B. Training vouchers are designed to integrate workers back into the labor force quickly, with a new caveat of skills that will benefit the individual in using the training funds to gain economic self-sufficiency.

II. Affected Parties:

- A. This policy applies to all TANF participants in the South Central service area.
 - 1. Contracted South Central TANF/EARN staff are responsible for implementing this policy.
- B. For the purpose of this policy, EARN, WorkReady, and SNAP participants will be referenced as TANF participants or as served by the TANF program.
 - 1. EARN, WorkReady, and SNAP service providers will be referenced as TANF staff.

III. Definitions:

- A. Employment, Advancement, and Retention Network (EARN) – Meets the needs of welfare recipients with barriers to employment by ensuring the availability of employment and training programs.
- B. TANF Training Voucher - A funding mechanism through which eligible individuals can benefit from financial resources to support participation in quality vocational training expected to result in employment in high-demand occupations.

- C. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - Provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.
- D. WorkReady Program - Provides a comprehensive set of employment-oriented services to those receiving Public Assistance benefits, including those needing specific help managing barriers to self-sufficiency.
- E. Pennsylvania County Assistance Offices (CAOs) - Provides aid and support to families in need.

IV. Eligibility Requirements:



- A. Training voucher funding is not guaranteed to any participant and is contingent on funding availability.
- B. EARN/SNAP/WORK READY participants may qualify for a TANF training voucher if it is determined by TANF staff and SCPa Works program staff that the participant meets the following criteria:
 - 1. A participant enrolled in a TANF-funded program within the South Central service area, in good standing with program requirements and expectations, such as meeting AMR hours.
 - 2. Following an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, contracted provider staff has determined that the participant:
 - a. Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services only;
 - b. Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
 - c. Has the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services.
 - 3. An individual has the time available for participation in the training program according to allowable South Central TANF program activities.
- C. Participants may receive a maximum of **\$7,000** in training voucher funding during their participation in a TANF-funded program, which will be paid directly to the organization providing the training to the participant.
 - 1. The maximum duration of the training will be no longer than one year.
- D. Contracted TANF staff must determine students who are eligible and suitable for training.
 - 1. Determining training suitability involves establishing an individual's level of need and qualification related to participating in their desired training program, among other factors, including but not limited to the consideration of alternative career approaches, the likelihood of gainful employment upon completion, and the alignment of training with an individual's predetermined or established career pathway.

V. Allowable Training Voucher Expenses:

- A. Training vouchers may support tuition and other training costs not covered under Special Allowances (SPAL), including fees, books, and school supplies, if the school requires the books and supplies.
- B. SPALs from the County Assistance Office that could be used to cover related training costs must be pursued before being considered for funding through a training voucher.
- C. Training offerings covered by training vouchers will be connected to employment upon completion of the training program.
- D. Training vouchers will be granted to programs with the following characteristics:
 - 1. Provides an industry-recognized credential;
 - 2. Inclusion on Pennsylvania's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL); and

3. Inclusion on Pennsylvania’s High Priority Occupation (HPO) List.
- E. An occupation requiring a bachelor’s degree or higher education is not eligible for funding.
 1. Training vouchers should align with key industry sectors identified by the HPO list issued by the state.
- F. SCPa Works and contracted TANF staff will work to align training funds across programs to ensure a broad portfolio of effective training options.
- G. SCPa Works approved contracted TANF staff must receive approval from SCPa Works on each training voucher before proceeding.
- H. Policy exceptions are granted under limited circumstances and may provide eligible exceptions to the requirements within this policy.
 1. Requests for exceptions may be submitted to spredko@SCPaworks.org.
 2. Requests for exceptions should include the following:
 - a. The specific policy requirement for which an exception is being requested;
 - b. A clear summary of the exception being requested and the reason for the exception; and
 - c. The Name and Participant ID of the participant(s) for which an exception is being requested; or
 - d. The name and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) of the business customer for which the exception is being requested.
 3. Exception requests will be reviewed based on availability under applicable TANF-related legislation, regulations, and policy/guidance.
 - a. SCPa Works will also consider funding availability, how an exception will lead to improved outcomes for the customer(s) being served, and other relevant factors.
 4. Requests for training voucher dollar amounts will not exceed **\$7,000** per individual.
 5. A training voucher is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The employment and training program should ensure that the training is an appropriate fit for the individual based on short and long-term career goals identified through the program intake process, relevant participant assessment results, and a participant’s existing skill set.

VI. Summary of Changes: This policy is reviewed every 180 days by the SCPa Works Policy Department for necessary changes, edits, updates, and revisions.

Date of Change:	Changed by:	Summary of Change(s):	Effective Date
07/18/2023	Saranne Miller 	Reviewed for changes. No revision is necessary.	07/18/2023
01/14/2024	Saranne Miller 	Reviewed for edits. No revision necessary. Re-formatted header page.	01/14/2024

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This document is reviewed for updates every 180 days by the SCPa Works Policy Department and was last reviewed on 01.14.2024.

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